



# NEWS RELEASE

## EUROPE REGIONAL MEDICAL COMMAND

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### *Change of Command – Europe Regional Medical Command*

**HEIDELBERG, Germany** – In a non-traditional ceremony that reflected the transformation climate in Europe, Brig. Gen. David A. Rubenstein, Medical Service Corps, took over the command of the Europe Regional Medical Command and Command Surgeon, U.S. Army, Europe, from Brig. Gen. Carla Hawley-Bowland, Aug. 23, 2006, on the parade field at Nachrichten Kaserne, Heidelberg, Germany.

With less than 100 Soldiers on the parade field, the ceremony was a living statement of the departure of thousands of Soldiers from Europe, from a high of over 199,000 during the Cold War years, to the current 55,000 or so, with 28,000 – 30,000 Army Soldiers being the Department of Defense's goal. The troops on the field included commanders and guidon bearers representing the units of the ERMIC family: the 30<sup>th</sup> Medical Brigade-Heidelberg; Landstuhl Regional Medical Center; 435<sup>th</sup> U.S. Air Force Medical Squadron; U.S. Army Medical Department Activity-Heidelberg; U.S. Army Medical Department Activity-Wurzburg; Medical Support Unit, 7<sup>th</sup> Army Reserve Command; the Color Guard from HHC, LRMC; U.S. Army Europe Regional Dental Command; Center for Health Promotion and Preventive Medicine-Europe; U.S. Army Medical Materiel Center – Europe; Task Force Med Falcon; U.S. Army Medical Research Unit – Europe; and the Deutsches Bundeswehr Sanitaets Kommando II, from Diez, Germany.

The ceremony's bright sunny day, following two weeks of steady rain, was perhaps a heavenly sign of approval of Hawley-Bowland's accomplishments and Rubenstein's pledge of things to come. For her accomplishments during the past two years, Brig. Gen. Hawley-Bowland received the Distinguished Service Medal in a private ceremony prior to the change of command. Hawley-Bowland's next assignment is as the Commanding General, Tripler Army Medical Center/Pacific Regional Medical Command/U.S. Army Pacific Surgeon/Lead Agent, TRICARE Pacific/Chief, U.S. Army Medical Corps.

For his part, Rubenstein pledged, “the Europe Regional Medical Command will be mission-ready to provide superior health care to the military in Europe and their families, whether it is in response to a conflict or disaster anywhere in the world or to the military health care needs in Europe – When we’re needed, we’ll be there.”

Rubenstein is aware his personnel assets are stretched thin. In addition to deploying its own soldiers to contingencies and answering the call for humanitarian missions and exercises, ERMCM is responsible for ensuring the readiness of active-duty Soldiers and to provide peacetime community healthcare services for their families and other eligible beneficiaries. The command operates the Landstuhl Regional Medical Center, the only U.S. military referral center offering subspecialty care in Europe; the Würzburg Medical Activity; the Heidelberg Medical Activity; and 24 outpatient medical clinics in Germany, Belgium, and Italy. Additionally, ERMCM provides command and control for the 30th Medical Brigade-Heidelberg and Task Force Med Falcon in Kosovo.

Before taking command of ERMCM, Rubenstein was the Assistant Surgeon General for Force Sustainment, assigned to U.S. Army Medical Command at Fort Sam Houston, Texas. Rubenstein, a Medical Service Corps officer and a Fellow of the American College of Healthcare Executives comes to ERMCM as a seasoned leader and commander.

His previous command assignments include the 30th Medical Brigade and U.S. Army V Corps Command Surgeon, both at Heidelberg, Germany. Other commands include Landstuhl Regional Medical Center, Landstuhl, Germany; 21st Combat Support Hospital, Fort Hood, Texas; Task Force Med Eagle, Bosnia & Herzegovina; 18th Surgical Hospital (MASH), Fort Lewis, Wash.; and Headquarters Company, 307th Medical Battalion (Airborne), 82nd Airborne Division, Fort Bragg, N.C.

Rubenstein and ERMCM are perfectly matched, considering his qualifications and the ongoing transformation efforts in Europe. The U.S. Army Europe (USAREUR) is inactivating units and moving units stateside quickly and as humanely and legally possible. The vacuum of patients resulting from unit movements is leaving some hospitals and clinics without patients, and therefore, without workloads. ERMCM is in the midst of realigning clinics with district commands and reassigning staff to match patient populations. His experience with and knowledge of ERMCM’s unique structure and mission requirements eliminates the steep learning curve new commanders undergo in the first months of command. Rubenstein immediately assumed his leadership role just minutes after the ceremony by holding a luncheon for hospital and clinic commanders and a subsequent commander’s call for all staff and employees.

In his speech as reviewing officer for the ceremony, Lt. Gen. Kevin C. Kiley, M.D., the U.S. Army Surgeon General and Commander, U.S. Army Medical Command, said, “Brig. Gen. Rubenstein is not a stranger to Heidelberg and Europe.” Kiley recognized Rubenstein’s past experience, saying, “His career goes back in command and senior leadership assignments both in the tactical and TDA community health care pieces and in every single respect his performance has been brilliant.” Kiley emphasized that Rubenstein “is the right officer at the right time to take on the leadership challenges of the continuing transformation of USAREUR and the Europe Regional Medical Command.”

This isn't the first time the medical command in Europe has had to reinvent itself. The Army's 7th Medical Command, was headquartered at Heidelberg and was a major separate command under U.S. Army Europe and 7th Army. The 7th MedCom had both a peacetime community healthcare mission and the mission to deploy its members in response to contingency operations. The U.S. Army European Health Service Support Area was activated on October 16, 1994, under the command and control of the U.S. Army Medical Command. The contingency mission of 7th Medical Command went to 30th Medical Brigade, a separate brigade under V Corps, a major subordinate command of U.S. Army Europe and 7th Army. The Health Service Support Area assumed responsibility for peacetime care. However, to clarify beneficiary recognition of its mission, it was re-designated as the Europe Regional Medical Command in July 1996. The drawdown of Europe began during this period, and over half the Army healthcare facilities in Europe closed.

Rubenstein will lead ERMCom as the Army once again transforms to a leaner organization centering on the Brigade Combat Team. For ERMCom, this time of transformation drives a complete reorganization and alignment of the peacetime medical support structure and the contingency-ready units of the 30th Medical Brigade. Within the next three to five years, a new structure will emerge that covers both peacetime requirements and contingency operation needs. Rubenstein's background in tactical and TDA organizations bodes well for the military community and the command.

Prior to his command assignments, Rubenstein served with the 3d Medical Battalion, 7th Infantry Regiment, Eisenhower, Madigan, and Beaumont Army Medical Centers, DeWitt Army Community Hospital, the Office of The Surgeon General, and the Academy of Health Sciences. He previously served as the ERMCom Chief of Staff.

Rubenstein is a graduate of Texas A&M University and the Army War College and earned a Master's Degree in Health Administration from Baylor University and a Master's Degree in Military Art and Science from the Army's Command and General Staff College.

He was appointed an Honorary Healthcare Administration Graduate Professor at Baylor University. His other honors include being the inaugural recipient of the US Army Medical Service Corps Mentor of the Year Award, induction into the Army Medical Department's Order of Military Medical Merit, and receipt of the Federal Excellence in Healthcare Leadership Award, Regent's Healthcare Executive Award from the American College of Healthcare Executives, and the Medical Service Corps Chief's Award of Excellence. He is listed in four *Who's Who* publications and has twice been included in *Modern Healthcare's* list of the 100 most influential people in Healthcare.

General Rubenstein is a board certified healthcare executive and has attained Fellow status in the 30,000 member American College of Healthcare Executives. He has previously served as a Governor on the College's Board of Governors and on national committees. He has also served as the Healthcare Administration Consultant to the Army Surgeon General. His other professional memberships include the Association of the United States Army, Association of Military Surgeons of the United States, American Hospital Association, and Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States.

General Rubenstein has authored peer-reviewed professional articles, has two books on military medical history in progress, and has served as a book reviewer in such professional military journals as Military Review, Army, and Military Medicine.

Among his awards and decorations are the Department of Defense Legion of Merit, Army Meritorious Service Medal, Army Commendation Medal, Army Achievement Medal, Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal, Humanitarian Service Medal, NATO Medal, Overseas Ribbon, Military Outstanding Volunteer Service Medal, Army Superior Unit Award, and German Proficiency Badge (Gold). He has earned the Expert Field Medical Badge, Master and Canadian Parachutist Badges, Ranger Tab, German Marksmanship Badge, Army Staff Identification Badge, The Surgeon General's "A" professional proficiency designator, and German Sports Badge.